

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: HEALTH SERVICES

DATE: JANUARY 25, 2006

Committee Members Present:

Supervisors Barody
Sheehan
Haskell
F. Thomas
Champagne
Mason

Representing Health Services Department:

Patricia Auer, Director
Ginelle Jones, Assistant Director, Public Health
Services
Sharon Schaldone, Assistant Director, Patient
Services
Tammie DeLorenzo, Fiscal Manager/Supervisor of
Clerical Services

Committee Member Absent:

Supervisor Tessier

William Thomas, Chairman
Supervisor William Kenny
Joan Sady, Second Deputy Clerk
Katy Goodman, Secretary to the Clerk

Mr. Barody called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

Motion was made by Mr. Haskell, seconded by Mr. Sheehan and carried unanimously to approve the minutes of the previous meeting, subject to correction by the clerk.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Mrs. Auer; and she distributed copies of her Agenda packet for the meeting, a copy of which is on file with the minutes.

Mr. Barody explained that prior to the meeting Mrs. Auer had e-mailed him her agenda and he had it on his laptop computer for use during the meeting. He stated for future meetings if any of the committee members would like to have the agenda e-mailed to them the day before the meeting they should provide Mrs. Auer with their e-mail addresses.

Mrs. Auer proceeded with review of her agenda and under Pending Items she requested approval of several resolutions relative to the agency's annual activities.

The first request Mrs. Auer said was to appoint and/or reappoint physicians for the agency's divisions and programs for the term of January 1, 2006 through December 31, 2006 as follows: 1) To appoint John Rugge, MD, as Medical Advisor for the Division of Patient Services; 2) To reappoint Daniel Larson, MD, as Medical Advisor for Public Health Programs; 3) To reappoint David Mousaw, MD, as Medical Director for the Physically Handicapped Children's Program and the Children With Special Health Care Needs Program; and 4) To appoint Richard Leach, MD, as Medical Director for Infectious Diseases. She apprised there are no changes in the amounts of these contracts.

Motion was made by Mr. Champagne, seconded by Mr. Sheehan and carried unanimously to approve the aforementioned request, as presented, and to authorize the necessary resolution for the next board meeting.

The next request, Mrs. Auer said was to appoint and reappoint members to the Professional Advisory Committee for Warren County Health Services for the term of January 1, 2006 through December 31, 2006 per the list that was included in the agenda packet.

Motion was made by Mr. Mason, seconded by Mr. F. Thomas and carried unanimously to approve the aforementioned request, as presented, and to authorize the necessary resolution for the next board meeting.

Mrs. Auer stated the next request was to appoint and reappoint members to the Warren County Local Early Intervention Coordinating Council (LEICC) for the term January 1, 2006 through December 31, 2006 per the list that was included in the agenda packet. Mrs. Auer explained they are mandated by State Law to have an LEICC.

Motion was made by Mr. Sheehan, seconded by Mr. Champagne and carried unanimously to approve the aforementioned request, as presented, and to authorize the necessary resolution for the next board meeting.

The last resolution request under the Pending Items, Mrs. Auer said was to approve the individuals listed on the agenda to work in Public Health Clinics. She apprised there is no change in the payments for these services.

Motion was made by Mr. Mason, seconded by Mr. Champagne and carried unanimously to approve the aforementioned request, as presented, and to authorize the necessary resolution for the next board meeting.

Concluding the Pending Items, Mrs. Auer reported the Telehealth Program was going very well and the units have all been distributed and the patients like the program. She stated at the February committee meeting Ms. Schaldone will provide a demonstration of the equipment with a real patient.

Discussion ensued relative to whether or not the agency's computer for the demonstration could be used in the board room in a wireless mode. Mrs. Auer said they would work that out with Mr. Barody before the next meeting and if the meeting had to be held in their conference room they would advise everyone accordingly. She stated Mr. Barody has spoken with a reporter from *The Post-Star* about doing an article on the Telehealth Program to educate the public about it.

Continuing, Mrs. Auer advised they are still waiting to receive contracts for grants for the program. Regarding the grant from the State Department of Health (DOH), Ms. Schaldone said she had called DOH yesterday to try to find out where the contract is but her call has not been returned

yet. Mrs. Auer advised they had applied for a USDA grant which initially they thought they would not receive. However, she said they will be receiving it because other applicants did not take it. She stated they have found out that under this grant the Honeywell HomMed firm's equipment can be used. Mrs. Auer said they would be receiving another call about the grant tomorrow so they will find out more details about it then. Mr. Barody remarked he wished the newspaper reporter was here today.

Mr. Barody noted the committee members might be familiar with a worldwide publication titled, *The Economist*. He said although it is published outside of the United States it is a very creditable magazine about the economy across the world and it has articles about different countries, trends, etc. Mr. Barody stated at the beginning of the year the magazine published an edition titled, "The World in 2006", which included comments from experts throughout the world on different trends. He stated one of the articles in that edition was on telemedicine and the impact of the aging of the baby boomer generation on the healthcare system and the nursing crunch that is going to create. Mr. Barody stated the article praised telemedicine as a good program as it would benefit patients and reduce costs. He commented that really backed up the committee members' decision to implement the program in the County and he would congratulate the agency's staff and the committee members for moving forward with the program. He said he would provide the committee members with copies of the article. A copy of the article is on file with the minutes.

Mrs. Auer stated they had found out that even though they had already been awarded a DOH telemedicine grant they could submit another application for a second grant round and they wished to do that.

Pursuant to New Business items Mrs. Auer outlined requests for approval of several resolutions relative to the agency's programs and activities.

The first request, she said was to submit an application to the New York State Department of Health Division of Home and Community Based Care, Bureau of Home Care and Hospice Surveillance and Quality Indications/Evaluation for a Home Telehealth Demonstration Grant in the amount not to exceed \$150,000 for a two-year period.

Motion was made by Mr. F. Thomas, seconded by Mr. Haskell and carried unanimously to approve the aforementioned request, as presented, and to authorize the necessary resolution for the next board meeting.

Next, Mrs. Auer requested approval to amend the 2006 County budget to accept \$6,500 from the Upper Hudson Primary Care Consortium on behalf of the Adirondack Rural Health Network. She stated the funds would assist in the purchase of one HomMed Sentry Unit to enhance the Telemedicine Home Monitoring Program. Mrs. Auer explained this unit will enable a number of elderly people who have cell phones instead of land lines to participate in the Telehealth Program.

Motion was made by Mr. Haskell, seconded by Mr. Mason and carried unanimously to approve the aforementioned request and to refer it to the Finance Committee.

Mr. Barody asked where the people without land lines were from; and Ms. Schaldone replied Queensbury. Brief general discussion ensued.

Mr. Kenny entered the meeting at 9:44 a.m.

Mrs. Auer stated the next request was to amend Resolution No. 564 of 2005 which had established charges for various immunizations to reflect changes in vaccine offerings and prices. She explained the changes in the charges were to establish the price of \$48.00 per dose for a new combination tetanus and pertussis (whooping cough) vaccine for adolescents and adults that has become available. Mrs. Auer advised this is the first pertussis vaccine for adults so they really needed to be able to offer it. In addition, she stated their costs per dose to purchase pre-rabies vaccine have increased so the request was to increase that cost from \$153.00 per dose to \$188.00 per dose to cover the increased costs.

Motion was made by Mr. Haskell and seconded by Mr. Champagne to approve the aforementioned request, as presented.

Following brief discussion, the motion was carried unanimously and the necessary resolution was authorized for the next board meeting.

The next request, Mrs. Auer outlined was to amend Resolution No. 261 of 2004 which had authorized an extension agreement with Health Information Matters for the provision of the annual on-site review of record keeping procedures for the Division of Public Health. She apprised the amendment was to allow checks for the service to be made out to Patricia Hawley, the owner of the business, instead of to Health Information Matters pursuant to Ms. Hawley's accountant's recommendation. The County Attorney has advised that the agreement should be amended in order to reflect this change, Mrs. Auer added. She stated the reimbursement for the service will not change.

Mrs. Sady entered the meeting at 9:46 a.m.

Motion was made by Mr. Mason, seconded by Mr. Champagne and carried unanimously to approve the aforementioned request, as presented, and to authorize the necessary resolution for the next board meeting.

Continuing with agenda review, Mrs. Auer presented a request to amend the current agreement with Capital District Beginnings, Incorporated, to allow Assistive Technology and Orientation and Mobility Evaluations to be conducted when requested and for reimbursement at the New York State approved rates for the Early Intervention Program or the Preschool Special Education Program.

Motion was made by Mr. Haskell, seconded by Mr. F. Thomas and carried unanimously to approve the aforementioned request, as presented, and to authorize the necessary resolution for the next board meeting.

The next request, Mrs. Auer stated was to rescind Resolution No. 639 of 2005 which had authorized a contract with Daniel Anderson, Occupational Therapist, for provision of those services. She explained the contract was never executed because Mr. Anderson had changed his mind about entering into it when he found out that the agency does not provide "guaranteed amounts of work" for its providers.

Motion was made by Mr. Haskell, seconded by Mr. Mason and carried unanimously to approve the aforementioned request, as presented, and to authorize the necessary resolution for the next board meeting.

Mrs. Auer presented a personnel request to fill a full time nursing position that is funded in the 2006 Budget. She recalled the position was created as full time because they had not been able to fill a part-time (24-hour per week/three-day) position last year. However, she stated another part-time nurse has resigned so they are down to two three-day-a-week positions so they would like to fill the full- time position and leave the part-time one vacant, if possible.

Motion was made by Mr. Haskell, seconded by Mr. Mason and carried unanimously to approve the aforementioned request, as presented, and to refer it to the Personnel Committee.

Mrs. Auer stated Ms. Jones, Assistant Director, Public Health Services, had some information concerning the Government Emergency Telecommunications Service (GETS) to provide the committee members. She advised this service was one of the deliverables under the agency's Emergency Preparedness grant.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Ms. Jones, and she distributed copies of a Fact Sheet on GETS to the committee members, a copy of which is on file with the minutes. She detailed that as part of this deliverable they are required to obtain calling cards that would provide security and emergency preparedness personnel access to local and long distance telephone networks during times of natural or man-made severe emergencies or disasters if the networks were not available. Ms. Jones apprised there would only be charges when the cards are used and the rates are .07 cents to .10 cents per minute. She explained under the terms of their Emergency Preparedness grant they are required to have the service so the committee members' permission was being requested to authorize them to pursue obtaining this service. Ms. Jones reported they had discussed the service at the recent Emergency Preparedness and Response Meeting and Shane Ross, of the Sheriff's Office, Marvin Lemery, Administrator of the Fire Prevention and Building Code Enforcement Department/County Fire Coordinator, Gary Scidmore, County Emergency Services Coordinator and John Farrell, County Civil Defense Director, all felt the system has merit.

Motion was made by Mr. Haskell, seconded by Mr. Sheehan and carried unanimously to approve the request that the Health Services Department should pursue obtaining the GETS service.

Mrs. Auer spoke on the issue of Fleet Management. She advised that earlier today they had discussed this issue with William Remington, Superintendent of the County DPW (Department of Public Works), and they will be planning a meeting with he and Frank Morehouse, County Fleet Manager, next month to try to resolve some of their concerns about the Fleet Management System. Thus, she said she hoped to be able to report back to the committee on the meeting at next month's committee meeting.

Mrs. Auer explained their concern is that the agency keeps track of its mileage through a card system for every (County fleet) car they use and for about six months they have sent the information over to Mr. Morehouse. However, she stated nothing is being done with the information and they had hoped to receive a report back on the data. Mrs. Auer stated it is time consuming to collect this information and they would ask if anything is going to be done with it or is it just going to the abyss.

Mr. Champagne said there was extensive discussion at yesterday's DPW Committee meeting and County Facilities Committee meeting about upgrading the County's gas delivery system for its vehicles but that was going to require setting aside some funds. In the meantime, he said he would like to see the agency's records in order to get some idea of what kinds of data would be needed to manage the fleet. Mr. Champagne recalled the original concept of having a Fleet Management System was to answer such questions as to whether it would be best for the County to own or lease vehicles and when to replace them, etc. He expressed concern that the system had not gotten very far in the past year. Maybe, he remarked that was because there had been some backing off on the system after it was first set up. Mr. Champagne stated he would encourage the agency, if possible, to continue to keep their records and that it should be ensured that the information would be used. He said he personally would take on that responsibility.

Mr. Haskell advised there had been some changes, i.e., new software that is compatible with the gas pumps and a new manager of the DPW garage which they hope will improve the situation with the fleet vehicles. At the conclusion of further discussion on the matter, Mr. Barody asked Mr. Champagne and Mr. Haskell to follow up on the fleet issues on behalf of the Health Services' Department and to report their findings back to the committee on a monthly basis.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Ms. DeLorenzo, the agency's Fiscal Manager, who presented requests for approval of resolutions relative to the agency's fiscal matters and contractual matters.

The first item was an interfund transfer in the amount of \$2,500 to move Tobacco Entitlement funds into the appropriate budget category to cover purchase of equipment. Ms. DeLorenzo added she had received guidance from the Treasurer's Office and the Auditor on this request.

Motion was made by Mr. Mason, seconded by Mr. Haskell and carried unanimously to approve the aforementioned request, as presented, and to refer it to the Finance Committee.

The next request, Ms. DeLorenzo said was an interfund transfer in the amount of \$41,260 to move funds into the correct budget category to cover costs of Workers' Compensation insurance paid directly by the department. She said she had discussed this request with Mrs. Parsons, Administrator/Clerk and Mr. Murphy, of the Treasurer's Office.

Motion was made by Mr. Champagne, seconded by Mr. F. Thomas and carried unanimously to approve the aforementioned request, as presented, and to refer it to the Finance Committee.

Continuing, Ms. DeLorenzo stated she has been working with private insurance companies in an effort to increase the payment rates the agency receives for its services to the clients of the various companies they contract with. She said she had been relatively successful and some insurers had increased the rates paid for skilled nursing visits by 50%.

Relative to agreements with private insurance companies, Ms. DeLorenzo said at the request of the County Attorney's Office she had requests for approval of resolutions to amend some resolutions and agreements. The first request, she said was to amend Resolution No. 751 of 2005 which authorized the current agreement with Univera Healthcare to make the rates effective February 1, 2006 and to delete the expiration date of June 30th each year for the agreement.

Motion was made by Mr. Haskell, seconded by Mr. Champagne and carried unanimously to approve the aforementioned request, as presented, and to authorize the necessary resolution for the next board meeting. Copies of a resolution request form and Resolution No. 751 of 2005 are on file with the minutes.

Continuing, Ms. DeLorenzo stated as more private insurance companies are coming into the area whenever any of the agency's patients are insured privately they will want to try to obtain payments from them and agreements will be necessary to set the reimbursement rates. Then, she said she would like to be able to renegotiate the rates each year.

Relative to that aspect of their insurance agreements and renegotiated rates, Ms. DeLorenzo stated Resolution No. 321 of 2004 had authorized an agreement with United Health Care Insurance Company of New York which covered rate renegotiations. However, she said the resolution did not authorize the Chairman of the Board to execute any agreements that would result from the rate negotiations so it needed to be amended to include that language.

Motion was made by Mr. Haskell, seconded by Mr. F. Thomas and carried unanimously to approve, the aforementioned request, as presented, and to authorize the necessary resolution for the next board meeting. Copies of a resolution request form and Resolution No. 321 of 2004 are on file with the minutes.

Concluding the agenda, Mrs. Auer said at Mr. Barody's suggestion she had put together a list of Goals and Objectives for the year and the list was included in the agenda packet. She pointed out their biggest overall goal was to retain and recruit staff. Mr. Barody said there was a little of the meeting time left to discuss the list. He commented it is a road map for the department and the committee for the year. Mr. Barody asked the committee members to review the items and bring their ideas and thoughts on them to the next committee meeting.

Mr. Barody asked Mrs. Auer if she or any of the staff would like to highlight any of the items in particular. Mrs. Auer noted each year the department does a lot of thinking and planning about emergency response issues and hopefully they will not have to carry out any of those plans.

Relative to the Telehealth Program, Mr. Barody recalled they were submitting another grant application that would cover some additional units. However, he asked what needed to be done with or without the grant to fully implement the program. Ms. Schaldone replied with the equipment that will be purchased with the grant the program will be fully implemented. She said she would know about the grant at the end of the week. If, Ms. Schaldone said they do not receive the grant she felt they would probably purchase only 31 more units because with the department's current capacity she thought they should stop with a total of 100 units. Mr. Barody asked Ms. Schaldone to report to the committee members at the next meeting on how the Telehealth Program has impacted the department's operations and their patient care and she acknowledged the request.

Mr. Haskell asked if \$150,000 would have to be budgeted for the additional equipment if they do not receive the grant. Ms. DeLorenzo explained under the grant they can ask for up to \$150,000 and then they have to determine how the funds would be used. She and Ms. Schaldone concurred 31 units would cost about \$100,000 - \$110,000. Mr. Haskell noted then they would have to budget about \$120,000 if they had to wait until next year's budget; and Ms. DeLorenzo agreed.

Ms. Schaldone stated one of the goals she would like to look at and pursue for the Health Services side of the department was the Point of Care Program which would get their clinical records computerized so they would be paperless. She advised that the Center for Medicare Services (CMS) has set a goal for agencies for the next five or six years to start looking at records computerization. Brief discussion followed.

In reply to Mr. Haskell's concern about all animal control officers in the towns being encouraged by the department to have the pre-rabies immunizations; Mrs. Auer replied they already do that. Mr. Barody commented that was a good point and it was good that the department makes those notifications.

Regarding the aforementioned Fleet Management issue, Mr. Champagne said he would like to see a plan for the fleet that would fit best with the department's operations. At the conclusion of further discussion on the issue, Mr. Barody asked Mr. Champagne to participate in the

aforementioned meeting with Mr. Remington. Mrs. Auer said when she has the date of the meeting she would e-mail it to Mr. Champagne.

Mrs. Auer commented the committee members could look forward to their presentation of the department's 2005 Annual Report via Power Point. Brief discussion followed.

There being no further business, on motion by Mr. Champagne and seconded by Mr. Mason, Mr. Barody adjourned the meeting at 10:15 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Katy Goodman, Secretary to the Clerk